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FOLK-TALES.

Louisiana Folk-Tales in French Dialect and English Translation, collected and edited by Alcée Fortier, Professor of Romance Languages in Tulane University, Louisiana. Vol. ii of the *Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society*. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1895. Cloth, large 8vo, xii, 122 pp.

THE pioneer among the collectors and editors of negro folk-lore in this country has been unquestionably Joel Chandler Harris, whose justly celebrated *Uncle Remus* has become a household book, and whose *Nights with Uncle Remus* and *Uncle Remus and His Friends* have found thousands of appreciative readers. His attitude towards comparative folk-lore is, however, very curious: in his first two books he shows much interest in this field of investigation, but in his third book he changes his attitude towards this question and ridicules his own former views, professing 'utter ignorance' on the subject 'without a pang.' Perhaps this sudden indifference to the scientific aspect of his work may account for the fact that the contents of a Japanese leaflet have found a place in *Uncle Remus and His Friends*.

While Mr. Harris' collections present a really excellent picture of the old plantation life of the South, especially the one just mentioned, they should not be used by the student of folk-lore without the exercise of due caution. Thoroughly reliable material of a similar sort is, however, offered by the following works: Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr.'s *Negro Myths*; Mrs. A. M. H. Christensen's *Afro-American Folk-Lore*; and Prof. Charles L. Edwards' *Bahama Songs and Stories*.¹ A most valuable addition to this latter class is the present volume by Prof. Fortier.

Having long been among the leading members of both the *Modern Language Association of America* and the *American Folk-Lore Society*, Prof. Fortier needs no introduction to the readers of MOD. LANG. NOTES; for many years he has been engaged in the study of his native state, and his *Louisiana Studies: Literature, Customs and Dialects*,

¹ Vol. iii, of the *Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society*.

History and Education were noticed in this journal as recently as the June number of 1894. He, therefore, was particularly well qualified to collect and edit the negro tales of Louisiana, and we may congratulate ourselves that he has refrained from giving them any embellishment, or setting, as by so doing he would have been apt to impair their absolute fidelity for the sake of enhancing their interest for the general reader. We find with pleasure that even the name of the informant is given in every case.

Prof. Fortier's book consists of a short Introduction, followed by twenty-seven hitherto unpublished stories given in the Creole dialect of Louisiana, with an English translation on the opposite page; these are in turn followed by a few Notes, and an Appendix containing fourteen additional tales which had been previously published by the author and which are given in English translation only. Some general remarks on the Louisiana Creole dialect and also on the tales themselves, occupy the space allotted to the Introduction, whilst for a more detailed account of the former the reader is referred to the *Louisiana Studies*. In this connection attention may be called for purposes of comparison to the Creole studies of R. de Poyen-Bellisile,² whose philological treatment of the dialect under investigation is followed by a few dialect texts among which we find given an animal tale.

Prof. Fortier's new stories comprise both animal tales and *märchen*, but it is to be noted that the second and fifth stories do not properly belong to the first category, if we may define an animal tale to be a story in which either all the actors, or at least the principal one, are animals. Jean Malin is the principal character of the second story, whilst Compair Taureau is merely a kind of werewolf; in the fifth, the Irishman who is too drunk to understand the frogs is practically the sole actor. On the other hand, the author was surely right in excluding the eighteenth from his animal tales, although Mozarovskij³ has embodied a similar story in his animal epic

² *Les Sons et les Formes du Créole dans les Antilles*, Baltimore: John Murphy and Co., 1894.

³ *Transactions of the Modern Language Association of America*, Vol. vi, Part 2, pp. 95 and f.

entitled *Lisa Patrikjevna*. It may be noted that Prof. Fortier has taken the term *märchen* in its most comprehensive sense, and that a few of those given resemble in their general character the Old-French *fabliaux*.

The Notes are few but judicious; extensive comparisons are not made because of the fact that another Memoir of the Society will be especially devoted to this purpose. Very happy was Prof. Fortier's discovery that the name of Compair Bouki, the common dupe of Compair Lapin, signifies hyena in the Ouolof language on the Senegal. The stories found in the Appendix have been reprinted merely for convenience's sake: the first ten originally appeared in the *Transactions* before mentioned, Vol. iii, pp. 100 and ff.; the last four in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 1888.

Space does not permit me to dwell at any great length on the contents of the stories themselves: the first tale of the *Elephant and the Whale* is a variant of the twenty-sixth in *Uncle Remus*, but is a more complete form, as is proved by a corresponding Brazilian tale; the story of the cask of butter which is eaten while its owner is at work appears both in the fourth and in the thirteenth tales, but contrary to the ordinary outcome Compair Lapin does not succeed in putting the blame upon someone else; very singular also is Compair Lapin's stupidity in the seventh, where he beheads himself because he thinks that Mr. Turkey takes off his head when he goes to sleep; the fifteenth story includes a great many incidents and is as long as the nine preceding tales put together; the part played by Jupiter in this story and that of the Mephistophelian devil in the third, give clear evidence of influence by white population, and the twenty-third is but a variant of the well-known *märchen* of the *Seven Ravens and Their Sister*, which has been so beautifully illustrated in the water-color drawings of Moritz von Schwind now in the museum of Weimar. In connection with the *Tar-Baby* story, as given in the first number of the Appendix, it is interesting to note that in the *Louisiana Stories* a case is mentioned in which a negro musician beats the hide on a barrel with his hands and feet, and

4 Pp. 126 and f.

sometimes, when quite carried away with enthusiasm, even with his head.

A. GERBER.

Earlham College.

GOTHIC GRAMMAR.

Gotische Grammatik mit einigen Lesestücken und Wortverzeichnis, von WILHELM BRAUNE. Vierte Auflage. Halle: Max Niemeyer. 1895.

A Gothic Grammar with selections for reading and a glossary, by WILHELM BRAUNE. Translated (from the fourth German edition) and edited with explanatory notes, complete citations, derivations, and correspondences, by GERHARD H. BALG. Second edition. Milwaukee, Wis.: the Author. New York: B. Westermann & Co.; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.

THE new edition of Braune's Gothic grammar is a very welcome book. Although the eight years that have passed since the third edition appeared have not materially changed our knowledge of elementary Gothic, addenda of value to the philologist have become sufficiently numerous to make a new edition desirable.

Adhering to his principle followed in previous editions, Braune has not introduced any comparative material in the present issue; the references, with an occasional exception of Brugmann's *Grundriss*, have been kept within the same limits as in the previous editions. Aside from numerous minor details that make the book the standard grammar of the Gothic language, two new sections have been inserted: §38a, on nominal composition, and §224, containing a bibliography of Gothic syntax. As might be expected of such a careful worker as Braune, and of a grammar that has stood the test for many years, very little remains to be said by the reviewer. The following lines are, therefore, intended mainly to call attention to an occasional misprint, or to omissions that may have been intentional on the part of the author: §12, anm. 3, read *funins* for *funinsl*.—§17, anm. 1, Joh. 10, 16 instead of Joh. 16, 16.—§29, anm. 4, add BB. 12, 211; 14, 160; 18, 407; Brugmann ii, 139.—§52. *fimf*, *hamfs* hardly